

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend claims 1, 3, 5, 9, 14, 16, 21, 26, 28, and 33-37 and add new claims 40-58. Please note that all claims currently pending in the application are included below for clarity, and a marked-up version of the claims is appended to the end of this response.

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1 1. (Amended) An apparatus comprising:  
2 a mounting portion including a first communication path to route at least one signal line  
3 from a first card connector on a circuit board to a first card connector on the  
4 mounting portion; and  
5 a routing portion including a communication path, the communication path of the routing  
6 portion to route at least one signal line from a second card connector on the circuit  
7 board to the mounting portion, a second communication path of the mounting  
8 portion to route the at least one signal line of the second card connector on the  
9 circuit board to a second card connector on the mounting portion.

1 2. The apparatus of claim 1, the mounting portion and the routing portion  
2 comprising a single integrated component.

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1 3. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising at least one  
2 other routing portion including a communication path to route at least one signal line  
3 from a third card connector on the circuit board to the mounting portion, a third  
4 communication path of the mounting portion to route the at least one signal line of the  
5 third card connector on the circuit board to a third card connector on the mounting  
6 portion.

1 4. The apparatus of claim 3, the routing portion and the at least one other  
2 routing portion comprising a compound routing portion.

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1 5. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, the routing portion comprising:  
2 a first riser for coupling with the second card connector on the circuit board; and  
3 a second riser coupled with the first riser, the second riser for coupling with the mounting  
4 portion.

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1 6. The apparatus of claim 5, the first riser and the second riser comprising a  
2 single part.

1 7. The apparatus of claim 5, the first riser oriented substantially transverse to  
2 the circuit board and the second riser oriented substantially parallel to the circuit board.

1 8. The apparatus of claim 1, the routing portion comprising a flexible cable.

1           9.     (Amended) An apparatus comprising:  
2     a circuit board;  
3     a processor disposed on the circuit board;  
4     a chip set disposed on the circuit board and coupled to the processor;  
5     a first card connector disposed on the circuit board and coupled to the chip set by at least  
6         one signal line;  
7     a second card connector disposed on the circuit board and coupled to the chip set by at  
8         least one signal line;  
9     a mounting portion secured in the first card connector on the circuit board, the mounting  
10         portion including a first communication path to couple the at least one signal line  
11         of the first card connector on the circuit board to a first card connector disposed  
12         on the mounting portion; and  
13     a routing portion secured in the second card connector on the circuit board, the routing  
14         portion including a communication path to couple the at least one signal line of  
15         the second card connector on the circuit board to the mounting portion, a second  
16         communication path of the mounting portion to couple the at least one signal line  
17         of the second card connector on the circuit board to a second card connector  
18         disposed on the mounting portion.

1           10.    The apparatus of claim 9, further comprising a peripheral card secured in  
2     one of the first card connector on the mounting portion and the second card connector on  
3     the mounting portion.

1           11.    The apparatus of claim 10, the mounting portion to orient the peripheral  
2     card substantially parallel to the circuit board.

1           12.    The apparatus of claim 9, each of the at least one signal line of the first  
2     card connector on the circuit board and the at least one signal line of the second card  
3     connector on the circuit board comprising at least a REQ# line and a GNT# line.

1 13. The apparatus of claim 9, the mounting portion and the routing portion  
2 comprising a single integrated component.

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1 14. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 9, further comprising:  
2 a third card connector disposed on the circuit board and coupled to the chip set by at least  
3 one signal line; and  
4 at least one other routing portion secured in the third card connector on the circuit board,  
5 the at least one other routing portion including a communication path to couple  
6 the at least one signal line of the third card connector on the circuit board to the  
7 mounting portion, a third communication path of the mounting portion to couple  
8 the at least one signal line of the third card connector on the circuit board to a  
9 third card connector disposed on the mounting portion.

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1 15. The apparatus of claim 14, the routing portion and the at least one other  
2 routing portion comprising a compound routing portion.

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1 16. (Amended) The apparatus of claim 9, the routing portion comprising:  
2 a first riser coupled with the second card connector on the circuit board; and  
3 a second riser coupled with the first riser, the second riser coupled with the mounting  
4 portion.

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1 17. The apparatus of claim 16, the first riser and the second riser comprising a  
2 single part.

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1 18. The apparatus of claim 16, the first riser oriented substantially transverse  
2 to the circuit board and the second riser oriented substantially parallel to the circuit board.

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1 19. The apparatus of claim 9, the routing portion comprising a flexible cable.

1           20.     The apparatus of claim 9, the first card connector on the circuit board  
2 separated from the second card connector on the circuit board by at least one intervening  
3 card connector disposed on the circuit board.

1           21.     (Amended) An apparatus comprising:  
2 a chassis;  
3 a circuit board disposed in the chassis;  
4 a processor disposed on the circuit board;  
5 a chip set disposed on the circuit board and coupled to the processor;  
6 a first card connector disposed on the circuit board and coupled to the chip set by at least  
7 one signal line;  
8 a second card connector disposed on the circuit board and coupled to the chip set by at  
9 least one signal line;  
10 a mounting portion secured in the first card connector on the circuit board, the mounting  
11 portion including a first communication path to couple the at least one signal line  
12 of the first card connector on the circuit board to a first card connector disposed  
13 on the mounting portion; and  
14 a routing portion secured in the second card connector on the circuit board, the routing  
15 portion including a communication path to couple the at least one signal line of  
16 the second card connector on the circuit board to the mounting portion, a second  
17 communication path of the mounting portion to couple the at least one signal line  
18 of the second card connector on the circuit board to a second card connector  
19 disposed on the mounting portion.

1           22.     The apparatus of claim 21, further comprising a peripheral card secured in  
2 one of the first card connector on the mounting portion and the second card connector on  
3 the mounting portion.

1           23.     The apparatus of claim 22, the mounting portion to orient the peripheral  
2 card substantially parallel to the circuit board.

1        24.    The apparatus of claim 21, each of the at least one signal line of the first  
2 card connector on the circuit board and the at least one signal line of the second card  
3 connector on the circuit board comprising at least a REQ# line and a GNT# line.

cont  
1        25.    The apparatus of claim 21, the mounting portion and the routing portion  
2 comprising a single integrated component.

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1        26.    (Amended) The apparatus of claim 21, further comprising:  
2 a third card connector disposed on the circuit board and coupled to the chip set by at least  
3 one signal line; and  
4 at least one other routing portion secured in the third card connector on the circuit board,  
5 the at least one other routing portion including a communication path to couple  
6 the at least one signal line of the third card connector on the circuit board to the  
7 mounting portion, a third communication path of the mounting portion to couple  
8 the at least one signal line of the third card connector on the circuit board to a  
9 third card connector disposed on the mounting portion.

1        27.    The apparatus of claim 26, the routing portion and the at least one other  
2 routing portion comprising a compound routing portion.

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1        28.    (Amended) The apparatus of claim 21, the routing portion comprising:  
2 a first riser coupled with the second card connector on the circuit board; and  
3 a second riser coupled with the first riser, the second riser coupled with the mounting  
4 portion.

1        29.    The apparatus of claim 28, the first riser and the second riser comprising a  
2 single part.

1        30.    The apparatus of claim 28, the first riser oriented substantially transverse  
2 to the circuit board and the second riser oriented substantially parallel to the circuit board.

1        31.     The apparatus of claim 21, the routing portion comprising a flexible cable.

1        32.     The apparatus of claim 21, the first card connector on the circuit board  
2 separated from the second card connector on the circuit board by at least one intervening  
3 card connector disposed on the circuit board.

1        33.     (Amended) An apparatus comprising:  
2 first routing means including a first communication means for routing at least one signal  
3 line from a first card connector on a circuit board to a first card connector  
4 disposed on the first routing means; and  
5 second routing means including a communication means, the communication means of  
6 the second routing means for routing at least one signal line from a second card  
7 connector on the circuit board to the first routing means, a second communication  
8 means of the first routing means to route the at least one signal line of the second  
9 card connector on the circuit board to a second card connector disposed on the  
10 first routing means.

1        34.     (Amended) The apparatus of claim 33, further comprising a third routing  
2 means including a communication means for routing at least one signal line from a third  
3 card connector on the circuit board to the first routing means, a third communication  
4 means of the first routing means to route the at least one signal line of the third card  
5 connector on the circuit board to a third card connector disposed on the first routing  
6 means.

1        35.     (Amended) The apparatus of claim 33, each of the first and second  
2 communication means of the first routing means and the communication means of the  
3 second routing means to route one of an electrical signal and an optical signal.

1        36.    (Amended) A method comprising:

2    securing a mounting structure to a first card connector on a circuit board;  
3    securing a routing structure to a second card connector on the circuit board;  
4    routing at least one signal line from the first card connector on the circuit board through a  
5        first communication path of the mounting structure to a first card connector on the  
6        mounting structure;  
7    routing at least one signal line from the second card connector on the circuit board  
8        through a communication path of the routing structure to the mounting structure;  
9        and  
10   routing the at least one signal line of the circuit board second card connector through a  
11        second communication path of the mounting structure to a second card connector  
12        on the mounting structure.

1        37.    (Amended) The method of claim 36, further comprising:

2    securing a second routing structure in a third card connector on the circuit board;  
3    routing at least one signal line from the third card connector on the circuit board through  
4        a communication path of the second routing structure to the mounting structure;  
5        and  
6    routing the at least one signal line of the circuit board third card connector through a third  
7        communication path of the mounting structure to a third card connector on the  
8        mounting structure.

1        38.    The method of claim 36, further comprising:

2    routing at least a REQ# line and a GNT# line from the first card connector on the circuit  
3        board to the first card connector on the mounting structure; and  
4    routing at least a REQ# line and a GNT# line from the second card connector on the  
5        circuit board to the second card connector on the mounting structure.



1 39. The method of claim 36, further comprising securing a peripheral card in  
2 one of the first card connector on the mounting structure and the second card connector  
3 on the mounting structure.

Please add new claims 40-58, as set forth below.

1 40. (New) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each of the first and second  
2 communication paths of the mounting portion and the communication path of the routing  
3 portion comprises an electrically conductive path.

1 41. (New) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each of the first and second  
2 communication paths of the mounting portion and the communication path of the routing  
3 portion comprises an optical path.

1 42. (New) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein each of the first and second  
2 communication paths of the mounting portion and the communication path of the routing  
3 portion comprises an electrically conductive path.

1 43. (New) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein each of the first and second  
2 communication paths of the mounting portion and the communication path of the routing  
3 portion comprises an optical path.

1 44. (New) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein each of the first and second  
2 communication paths of the mounting portion and the communication path of the routing  
3 portion comprises an electrically conductive path.

1 45. (New) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein each of the first and second  
2 communication paths of the mounting portion and the communication path of the routing  
3 portion comprises an optical path.

1 46. (New) An apparatus comprising:  
2 a circuit board;  
3 a first card connector disposed on the circuit board and having at least one signal line  
4 extending therefrom;  
5 a second card connector disposed on the circuit board and having at least one signal line  
6 extending therefrom;  
7 a mounting portion secured in the first card connector on the circuit board, the mounting  
8 portion including a first communication path to couple the at least one signal line  
9 of the first card connector on the circuit board to a first card connector disposed  
10 on the mounting portion; and  
11 a routing portion secured in the second card connector on the circuit board, the routing  
12 portion including a communication path to couple the at least one signal line of  
13 the second card connector on the circuit board to the mounting portion, a second  
14 communication path of the mounting portion to couple the at least one signal line  
15 of the second card connector on the circuit board to a second card connector  
16 disposed on the mounting portion.

1 47. (New) The apparatus of claim 46, further comprising a peripheral card  
2 secured in one of the first card connector on the mounting portion and the second card  
3 connector on the mounting portion.

1 48. (New) The apparatus of claim 47, the mounting portion to orient the  
2 peripheral card substantially parallel to the circuit board.

1 49. (New) The apparatus of claim 46, the mounting portion and the routing  
2 portion comprising a single integrated component.

1 50. (New) The apparatus of claim 46, further comprising:  
2 a third card connector disposed on the circuit board and having at least one signal line  
3 extending therefrom; and  
4 at least one other routing portion secured in the third card connector on the circuit board,  
5 the at least one other routing portion including a communication path to couple  
6 the at least one signal line of the third card connector on the circuit board to the  
7 mounting portion, a third communication path of the mounting portion to couple  
8 the at least one signal line of the third card connector on the circuit board to a  
9 third card connector disposed on the mounting portion.

1 51. (New) The apparatus of claim 50, the routing portion and the at least one  
2 other routing portion comprising a compound routing portion.

1 52. (New) The apparatus of claim 46, the routing portion comprising:  
2 a first riser coupled with the second card connector on the circuit board; and  
3 a second riser coupled with the first riser, the second riser coupled with the mounting  
4 portion.

1 53. (New) The apparatus of claim 52, the first riser and the second riser  
2 comprising a single part.

1 54. (New) The apparatus of claim 52, the first riser oriented substantially  
2 transverse to the circuit board and the second riser oriented substantially parallel to the  
3 circuit board.

1 55. (New) The apparatus of claim 46, the routing portion comprising a  
2 flexible cable.